

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending after entry of this paper. Claims 1-25 have been subjected to a restriction requirement. No amendments to the claims have been made at this time.

Examiner's Restriction Requirement and Provisional Election

The Examiner has required restriction of claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. §§121 and 372. The Examiner has outlined two groups which allegedly fail to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. Specifically, the Examiner has outlined the following groups:

- Group I (claims 1-15 and 24-25) drawn to a method for the thermal treatment of granular solids in a fluidized-bed reactor.
- Group II (claims 16-23) drawn to a plant for the thermal treatment of granular solids in a fluidized bed reactor.

Applicants provisionally elect to prosecute **Group I** encompassing claims 1-15 and 24-25. Applicants make this election **with traverse**.

Traversal of Restriction Requirement

The Examiner contends that Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept because they allegedly lack the same or corresponding special technical features, which the Examiner contends is a fluidized bed reactor. Specifically, the Examiner contends that a review of U.S. Patent No. 5,382,412 ("Kim et al.") "makes clear that the

inventions of Groups I and II lack the same or corresponding special technical feature because the cited reference(s) appear to demonstrate that a fluidized bed reactor heated by microwaves is constructed for a high temperature-deposition reaction on seed particles” (page 3 of the Office Action). The Examiner concludes that “prior art of the record supports restriction of the claimed subject matter.” Applicants respectfully disagree, for the reasons set forth below.

Although Kim et al. discloses a fluidized bed reactor heated by microwaves, Kim et al. fails to disclose the introduction of microwaves into the fluidized bed reactor through the central gas supply tube, as recited in both claim 1 and claim 16. In Kim et al., the microwaves 25 are introduced through waveguides 24a, 24b and thus enter radially into the heating chamber 10 (see, e.g., col. 7, lines 38-45 and col. 10, lines 8-14). In contrast, method claim 1 and plant claim 16 both recite that the microwaves are introduced through the central gas supply tube into the mixing chamber 7. The heating in the instant claims therefore occurs in a zone of the reactor than in Kim et al. This special technical feature, not disclosed in Kim et al., is shared by independent claims 1 and 16 of the instant application.

Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. §§121 and 372 for lack of unity of invention.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing remarks, applicants respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement of claims and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 4791-4006.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 4791-4006.

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

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By: /Andrew D. Cohen/

Andrew D. Cohen
Registration No. 61,508

Correspondence Address:
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
3 World Financial Center
New York, NY 10281-2101
(212) 415-8700 Telephone
(212) 415-8701 Facsimile